

Benjamin Franklin, 1862 by Hiram Powers [1805–1873]

1. Stand like Franklin with your weight resting on one leg and with the other leg bent. Notice how this is more relaxed than stiffly standing on two feet. This is a classical *contrapposto* pose. You might view ancient Greek and Roman sculptures in this pose such as the nude *Doryphoros* (Spear-Bearer) of Polykleitos.
2. Describe Franklin's hair, hat, vest, coat, and shoes.
3. What is Franklin wearing on his legs? How can you tell?
4. Imagine how warm the typical clothes worn in 1776 would feel in Philadelphia's winters and summers.
5. Even though Powers lived later than Franklin, he created a realistic portrait of him. How did Powers learn about Franklin's clothes and face?
6. Compare Franklin's pose to that of Gilbert Stuart's George Washington in 3-B.
7. Why is Franklin dressed so casually?
8. Ask students why Powers included the tree stump in this statue.
9. Why did the United States government want a statue of Benjamin Franklin in the U.S. Capitol?
10. Nineteenth-century sculptors often depicted leaders in classical Greek or Roman robes, reminding viewers that American government had its roots in ancient Greece. Remind students of the Statue of Liberty's robes. Powers was criticized for showing Franklin in contemporary clothing. Why did Powers choose to show Franklin in mid-eighteenth-century clothing rather than a Roman toga?

Historical Connections: Pennsylvania history; history of American diplomacy; Age of Enlightenment

Historical Figures: Benjamin Franklin; Thomas Paine

Civics: Founding Fathers; Constitutional Conventions

Science: electricity; other experiments and inventions

Literary Connections and Primary Documents: *Benjamin Franklin*, Ingrid D'Aulaire (elementary); *B. Franklin, Printer*, David A. Adler; *Autobiography of Ben Franklin* (also known as *The Private Life of the Late Benjamin Franklin*); *Poor Richards Almanack*, Benjamin Franklin

Arts: Neoclassical sculpture; idealism